



Ninety-Seventh Legislature - First Session - 2001
Introducer's Statement of Intent
LB 585

Chairperson: Senator Curt Bromm
Committee: Transportation and Telecommunications
Date of Hearing: February 6, 2001

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 585 imposes a 50-cent monthly fee on wireless phone users (wireless service subscribers) and establishes a system whereby 9-1-1 dispatch centers (public safety answering points) and wireless phone companies (wireless carriers) can fund equipment to identify and locate calls coming from wireless phones.

The fee is collected by the wireless carriers and remitted to the Division of Communications in the Nebraska Department of Administrative Services. The money will be used for grants to pay for equipment and maintenance necessary for the public safety answering points to identify a wireless phone caller's phone number and to find where the caller is located. This information is often necessary in emergency situations in order for the dispatch operator to direct the emergency responders to the scene of the incident.

The funds will be distributed to public safety answering points and wireless carriers through a grant process. An advisory board is created made of local officials and phone company representatives to advise the Division of Communications and the Legislature on the program.

Currently cities and counties (other than counties with a city of the metropolitan class) can charge up to one dollar on each landline telephone to support the operation and maintenance of a public safety answering point. Counties with a metropolitan class city can charge up to fifty cents. There is no authority, however to charge a fee on wireless phones. As more people use wireless phones, the calls to public safety answering points from wireless phones are increasing. This program will help the public safety answering points respond to calls from wireless phones.

Federal law requires wireless carriers to develop equipment to identify wireless phone caller numbers and to find where the caller is located. The law also provides that if public safety answering points wish to implement such a system, the state should have a program in place to fund the equipment that the wireless carriers and the public safety answering points need to accomplish this. LB 585 is designed to comply with the federal requirements and to raise funds to help public safety answering points respond to calls from wireless phones.

Principal Introducer:

Senator L. Patrick Engel